



# **Aspen** *Environmental Group*

## **PROJECT MEMORANDUM**

### **SDG&E – MIGUEL-MISSION 230 kV #2 PROJECT**

**To:** Jensen Uchida, CPUC

**From:** Vida Strong, Aspen Project Manager

**Date:** April 19, 2005

**Subject:** Weekly Report #37: April 10 – April 16, 2005.

**CPUC Environmental Monitor (EM):** Christopher Meyer

## **FANITA JUNCTION TO MIGUEL 138/69 kV ACTIVITIES, NTP #1 AND #2**

### **Summary of Activity:**

The CPUC EM conducted site visits on April 13 and April 14 to review construction progress and Storm Water Pollution Prevention (SWPPP) issues. Various types of construction activity were observed during the site visit. Much of the 138 kV work on the segment has been completed. Work observed during the site visit in the areas covered by Notices to Proceed (NTP) #1 and #2 included the following:

1. A heavy-lift helicopter was used to set the steel poles at Pole Sites 493 and 522 on Wednesday of the subject week. The operation proceeded very smoothly and was completed by noon. These are the steel poles where the foundations were completed using the micro-pile method due to the steep side-slope (see Figure 1). The CPUC EM has not been advised of any complaints from the public on the use of a helicopter at the sites.
2. The Woodward crew continued drilling and using the hydraulic hammer on the hard rock at Pole Site 30 during the subject week (see Figure 2). The crew used a rock-hammer to assist in breaking up the rock ledges at the edges of the excavation in between drilling (see Figure 3). The excavation was to depth and crew was close to final width at the time of the site visit. This foundation is the final 138 kV excavation and the drilling contractors have started to demobilize from the project. A section of chain-link fence used to cover the open excavation was observed on the habitat adjacent to the pad. Construction equipment and materials needs to remain within the disturbed area.
3. A PAR grading crew continued working with the Testing Engineers inspector to expand work pads for the transmission line crew stringing work and crane setup. Work occurred at Pole Sites 41 and 92 during the subject week.
4. Clean-up activity was observed at several locations along the project right-of-way. Crews cleaned construction debris from the pad sites and removed construction materials.

### **Environmental Compliance:**

1. Several sites that were restored earlier in the project are now starting to get new vegetation. Depending on the schedule for restoration of the rest of the disturbed sites, revegetation may have to wait until the next growing season for the plants to get established prior to summer.
2. Best Management Practices (BMPs) have been installed around the pad locations and crews have repaired the pads and the access roads that were not passable after the early season storms.
3. The road to Fanita Junction needed repair before work could continue. The access road was covered with mud and grading would just force the mud off the approved access road. The CPUC EM previously reminded SDG&E that the mud from the access road could not be pushed outside the footprint

of the existing access road. However, as previously reported, some mud has been pushed from the road during recent grading activities and will have to be addressed prior to any rains. This mud is still on site, but has been covered with plastic to prevent sediment transport.

4. An Essex Environmental Inspector (EI) was on-site for spot-checking environmental compliance issues on the project. Biologists worked to survey gnatcatcher areas prior to construction. The construction crews were reminded by Essex that surveys need to be conducted prior to work in many areas. In addition, although some brushing activities may to be completed after the March 1 deadline under Variance Request #10, the cut vegetation should be moved away from the contiguous habitat immediately and under the supervision of an EI.

#### **MISSION TO MIGUEL SUBSTATION 230 kV ACTIVITIES, NTPS #3 AND #4**

##### **Summary of Activity:**

The CPUC EM conducted site visits on April 13 and April 14 to review construction progress and SWPPP issues related to installation of the permanent and temporary 230 kV systems.

##### **PERMANENT 230 kV INSTALLATION**

NTP #3 was issued to address 230 kV work on Marine Corps Air Station Miramar prior to the NTP for all 230 kV work to address the expiration of a permit with the Navy. NTP #4 addressed the permanent upgrading of the 230 kV transmission system between the Miguel and Mission Substations. The following were the main construction activities or issues that occurred during the subject week:

1. A Wilson crew worked on the hill directly above the Los Coches substation installing a steel pole during the site visit. The first crew set the lower section of the steel pole, but hit a live 12 kV service line with the mobile crane on the way down the hill (see Figure 4). Work was suspended until a SDG&E Transmission operations crew reviewed the damage and investigated the incident. No injuries or environmental damage occurred as a result of the accident. Work resumed in the early afternoon and a larger crane was moved up the hill to set the upper sections of the steel poles. A small bulldozer was used to assist the truck carrying the pole section up the steel slope (see Figure 5).
2. Wilson Construction crews continued work on installing steel poles and dead-ended several poles in preparation for pulling conductor.
3. The Wilson subcontractor, Crux, worked at Willow Road pouring the foundation for the micro-pile at Pole Site 589.

##### **TEMPORARY 230 kV INSTALLATION**

NTP #4 also addressed the installation of the 15-mile temporary 230 kV line from Miguel to Los Coches Substations. Other than clearing of vegetation prior to March 1, the temporary 230 kV work between Miguel to Los Coches Substations is awaiting the completion of work on the 138 kV system by PAR. Once PAR has finished work on the segment, the Wilson Construction crews will start the upgrades to the existing towers. The installation of the temporary wood poles has been completed. Although the steel 138 kV poles currently being installed by PAR between Los Coches and the Miguel Substation will be permanent, the 230 kV conductor is being strung temporarily to facilitate the early energization of the line.

A crew worked on installing guard structures at a road crossing in the Steele Canyon area during the site visit. It was determined that no guard structure would be installed on the east side of Steele Canyon Road due to the presence of ambrosia.

**Environmental Compliance:**

1. Best Management Practices (BMPs) have been installed around the pad locations and crews have repaired the pads and the access roads that were not passable after the early season storms.
2. An Essex EI has been working closely with the Wilson crews to perform any necessary training and arrange for any required biological surveys; however, the crew setting steel poles above the Los Coches substation mobilized to the area prior to updated coastal California gnatcatcher and cactus wren surveys. The area had been surveyed and cleared for work previously, but was not currently approved for work due to the long period of inactivity at the site. The incident was reported to the CPUC EM by SDG&E and the Wilson foreman reported the incident to their company environmental specialist. No gnatcatchers were observed in the area and the Essex biologists surveying the area did not believe the activity disturbed the pair of cactus wren downslope of the site. A red-tail hawk nest was observed adjacent to the access road above Los Coches substation (see Figure 6). The Essex EI monitored the nest for signs of disturbance from construction activities.

**NOTICES TO PROCEED (NTP):**

NTPs #1 and #2 have been issued by CPUC for access road upgrade/construction and 138/69 kV tower installation along the Fanita Junction to Los Coches and Los Coches to Miguel segments. NTP #3 to address the 230 kV construction work on Miramar Naval Air Station was issued by CPUC November 16. NTP #4 for upgrading of the 230 kV transmission system between the Miguel and Mission Substations, and installation of the 15-mile temporary 230 kV line from Miguel to Los Coches Substations was issued by CPUC on December 20.

**VARIANCE REQUESTS:**

On April 15, SDG&E submitted Variance Request #15 to allow evening and Sunday work with CPUC EM approval. This request is under review

**TABLE 1**  
**VARIANCE REQUEST STATUS**  
(Updated 04/19/05)

Variance Request #	Date Submitted	Description	Status	CPUC Approval Date
1	07/07/04	Use of five storage and staging areas on the Los Coches to Fanita Junction Section for the duration of the project.	Completed	07/23/04
2	08/10/04	Clearing of coastal sage scrub habitat before September 1 on the Miguel to Fanita Junction section during the 2003/2004 nesting season.	Completed	08/13/04
3	09/01/04	Grading and clearing in quino checkerspot butterfly habitat after October 15.	Completed	09/14/04
4	09/06/04	Allow work on Saturdays near recreational facilities.	Completed	09/14/04
5	09/27/04	Use of six storage and staging areas on the Los Coches to Fanita Junction Section for the duration of the project.	Completed	10/06/04
6	10/20/04	Work on Sunday, October 31 at Tower Site 925 to comply with a Cal ISO outage schedule.	Completed	10/26/04
7	01/13/05	Reconfiguration of approved stringing/snubbing sites at Pole Sites 10 and 961.	Completed	01/17/05
8	02/03/05	Work after 7pm, February 8 at Pole 1210 to complete the concrete pour at the wet-hole.	Completed	02/04/05
9	02/16/05	Perform construction activities on Sunday, February 20 at Pole Site 493.	Completed	02/17/05
10	03/10/05	Clearing of coastal sage scrub habitat after March 1 on the project during the 2004/2005 nesting season.	Completed	3/22/05
11	03/14/05	Work after 7pm at Pole 411 to complete the concrete pour at the wet-hole.	Completed	03/16/05
12	03/14/05	Work on Sunday, March 20 to string cable at eight towers to comply with a Cal ISO outage schedule. Modification added for line work north of Los Coches Substation.	Completed	03/17/05
13	03/28/05	Work on Cesar Chavez holiday, Thursday March 31.	Not Required	N/A
14	03/29/05	Work on Sunday, April 3 and Sunday, April 10 to string cable to comply with Caltrans/Highway Patrol lane closure requirements.	Completed	3/30/05
15	04/15/05	Programmatic variance to work on outside the approved construction schedule with prior approval from the CPUC EM.	Under Review	Pending

**UPCOMING ITEMS:** None

**AGENCY PERSONNEL CONTACTS:** None

**TABLE 2**  
**TEWS TRACKING**  
(Updated 04/19/05)

Number	Segment	Date Received	Description	Status	Approval Date <sup>1</sup>
*	Los Coches to Miguel	07/06/04	14000 Block of Willow Road, San Diego County	Approved from 7/08 to 9/08	See Variance Request #1
*	Los Coches to Miguel	07/06/04	Vista de Montemar ½ mile north of La Cresta Road, San Diego County	Approved from 7/08 to 9/08	See Variance Request #1
*	Los Coches to Miguel	07/06/04	Vista de Montemar ½ mile north of La Cresta Road, San Diego County	Approved from 7/08 to 9/08	See Variance Request #1
1	Los Coches to Miguel	07/24/04	Vista de Montemar ½ mile north of La Cresta Road, San Diego County	Approved from 7/26 to 9/26	See Variance Request #2
2	Los Coches to Miguel	08/14/04	1600 Block Sweeney Court, San Diego County	Approved from 08/16 to 10/16	See Variance Request #2
3	Los Coches to Miguel	08/14/04	2300 Willow Glen Drive, San Diego County	Approved from 08/16 to 10/16	See Variance Request #2
4	Los Coches to Miguel	08/14/04	South of terminus of Camino Monte Sombra, San Diego County	Approved from 08/16 to 10/16	See Variance Request #2
5	Los Coches to Miguel	08/14/04	Southeast of 2600 block Pence Drive, San Diego County	Approved from 08/16 to 10/16	See Variance Request #2
6	Los Coches to Miguel	08/26/04	North side of Singing Vista Way, San Diego County	Approved from 08/27 to 10/27	See Variance Request #2
7	Los Coches to Miguel	02/11/05	Southwest of Pence Road, San Diego County	Approved from 02/16 to 04/16	02/16/05
8	Los Coches to Miguel	03/11/05	Helicopter fly pad for 138 kV installation, Padre Water District	Approved from 03/16 to 05/16	03/16/05
9	Mission to Fanita	03/18/05	Helicopter fly pad for 138 kV installation, Padre Water District	Approved from 03/21 to 05/21	03/21/05
10	Los Coches to Miguel	03/29/05	PAR staging and show-up yard on Jamacha Road.	Approved from 03/29 to 05/29	03/29/05

<sup>1</sup>For TEWS requests, Approval Date reflects EM approval date. TEWS approvals valid for 60 days only.

## Photographs



**Figure 1** – A heavy-lift helicopter was used to set the steel pole sections at Pole Site 493.



**Figure 2** – The Woodward drilling crew worked at Pole Site 30 to complete the final 138 kV foundation excavation on the project.





**Figure 3** – The Woodward drilling crew at Pole Site 30 used a hydraulic hammer to break off the rock shelves on the sides of the excavation.



**Figure 4** – A mobile crane struck a live 12 kV service line on the access road above the Los Coches Substation.



**Figure 5** – Wilson moved the upper section of the steel pole up to the crane pad above Los Coches Substation.



**Figure 6** – An active red-tail hawk nest is just above the Los Coches Substation in a lattice tower.